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ABSTRACT

The research investigated whether poor Hispanic youth exhibited less migration than nonpoor Hispanic youth. The hypothesis was that migration is a means to escape poverty, although poverty acts as an inhibitor to migration. The data for the study were derived from The Youth Cohort of the National Longitudinal Survey (NLS/Y) and the 1988 County and City Data Book (U.S. Census Bureau). Individual migration between 1984 and 1986 for 1,466 Hispanic respondents who were ages 14-21 in 1979 was the dependent variable. Log linear modeling was used to analyze the data. Microlevel variables (characteristics of respondents) were: sex, occupation status, educational attainment, public assistance, and poverty status. Macrolevel variables (characteristics of counties) were: unemployment rate and percentage of families poor (i.e., below the poverty level). Results showed partial support for the hypothesis, depending on how poverty was defined. Poverty status places limitations on the geographical mobility of Hispanics and may limit their ability to upgrade their socioeconomic status; therefore, policymakers need to concentrate on providing education and training to Hispanic youth. The educational attainment of Hispanics remains below the level of their non-Hispanic counterparts and Hispanics tend to have higher rates of unemployment than Whites. Policies should target employment opportunities for Hispanics. (KS)

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MIGRATION OF HISPANIC YOUTH AND POVERTY STATUS: A LOGIT ANALYSIS

by

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Introduction

Hispanics are the fastest growing minority group in the United States (Valdivieso & Davis, 1988) a fact which has important economic, social, and political implications. A large and growing segment of this population lives in poverty (Valdivieso & Davis, 1988). The 1988 U.S. Census Bureau (1988b) reports a poverty rate of 28.2 percent in 1987 for Hispanics. This is the highest poverty rate ever for this group and second only to the nation's Blacks, who in the same year had a poverty rate of 31.1 percent. In 1988, Hispanic family income was 63 percent that of whites (O'Hare, 1989). Median family income for Hispanics in 1987 was only $20,300, two-thirds of the non-Hispanic median income of $31,600. This figure did not change noticeably in 1989. According to a report from the U. S. Commerce Department's Census Bureau (September, 1990), the median income in 1989 was $ 21, 920, not statistically different from 1988 in real terms. Generally, Hispanics have less education, lower incomes, and higher rates of unemployment than most other groups; important determinants of economic well-being.

Identifying the interactions between poverty and other socioeconomic characteristics of this rapidly growing

minority is essential. The focus of this paper is on the relationship between poverty status and the migration behavior of Hispanics; specifically addressing the impact of contextual and personal variables on the migration behavior of individual Hispanics. Several theoretical perspectives suggest that migration is a key strategy in increasing the socioeconomic mobility of individuals and a means by which individuals may escape poverty (Da Vanzo & Morrison, 1981). A primary concern is the analysis of the migration of poor and nonpoor Hispanic youth in the context of living in economically poor and nonpoor areas. Thus, this paper attempts to answer the question Do poor Hispanics exhibit less migration than nonpoor Hispanics in specified environmental context? Data on individual characteristics for the analysis come from the Youth cohort of the National Longitudinal Surveys. In these annual surveys, county of resident at the time of each interview was identified. This information is used to measure migration and to merge county characteristic data onto the individual respondent file. Individual migration between 1984 and 1986 is the dependent variable for this study. During this interval, the respondents had moved into young adulthood, a period in their life cycle where they are in processes of selecting long term places to live and establishing long lasting economic

foundations. These are important reasons to study Hispanic youth migration behavior.

Several years ago, Tienda (1982) indicated that while there were a number of studies about residential changes of Hispanics, they were of a descriptive nature. There was little research on the correlates or determinants of migratory behavior in the Hispanic population. This is still true. It is important to conduct studies that reduce this serious gap in our knowledge. Such research can be integrated into a coherent theoretical framework that permits generalization about this important minority.

Studies of migration have generally relied upon either micro or macro levels of analysis but have not considered both levels simultaneously. Each approach is useful, and both generate complementary information about population movements in relation to individual migrants and the characteristics of sending and receiving communities (Findley, 1982). However, when used independently of one another, macro and micro approaches can lead to premature and shortsighted conclusions about the social significance of patterns of population movements and the underlying causal forces (Tienda, 1982). Using data from both micro level and macro level sources is a more fruitful approach allowing for a more complete model of migration, "since the different approaches are actually

dealing with the same aspects of human social behavior" (De Jong & Fawcett, 1981 p. 13). This paper is an attempt to solve the problems indicated above in the context of the Hispanic population. Both micro and macro level data will be employed in a logit analysis of the data.

Review of the Literature

Decades ago the Hispanic American population consisted primarily of persons of Spanish descent and a few Mexican-Americans living in the Southwest. Today the "umbrella" term covers a much more diverse population and may include any race (Harrington, 1984). In this paper, the term Hispanic refers to individuals of Spanish heritage who belong to any of the four categories listed by the U.S. Census Bureau. These categories are 1) Mexican-Americans, who comprise the largest group of Hispanics, living mostly in the southwest; 2) Puerto Ricans, an intermixture of Spanish, Indian, and black living mostly in the northeast; 3) Cubans, the smallest group, who assumed numerical importance as an ethnic group in the U.S. after the 1950 Cuban Revolution and with the later significant addition of the Mariel Sealift during the 1980. Cubans live mostly in Dade county, Florida; and 4) the "other Hispanics" category, now the

second largest of the four groups, that is composed of people from other Spanish-speaking countries of Latin America and from Spain (Valdivieso & Davis, 1988).

Poverty Among Hispanics in the Untied States

The United States is one of the richest countries in the world, yet poverty and dependency are problems for 25 to 39% of the people of this country (Axinn & Stern, 1988). Hispanics comprise a large proportion of the poor in the United States. The U.S. Census Bureau (1990) indicates that in 1989, 17% of the poor were Hispanics. With the exception of Cubans, Hispanics have less education, lower family income, and are more likely to be living in poverty than the general population in the United States. The Hispanic poverty rate is below that of blacks, though the percentage of difference in the rates for Hispanics and blacks has narrowed from 9.2 gap in 1979 to 2.3% in 1985 (U. S. Census Bureau, 1989).

Hispanic poverty rates have risen in all regions of the country in recent years (Valdivieso & Davis, 1988), particularly in the South where the 1987 poverty rate was 36.6%. The lowest poverty rate was reported in the West, at 23% (Valdivieso & Davis, 1988). According to Robert Greenstein, Director of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities,

> "The current economic recovery appears to be benefiting Hispanics much less than other groups...Hispanics are the only racial or ethnic group whose poverty rate remains at or close to recession levels (Greenstein et al., 1988, p. 26)".

Hispanic income levels actually dropped dramatically during the recession of the early 1980s; only half the losses have been made-up. Persons of Hispanic origin accounted for only 6% of the nonpoor in 1985, while their percentage in the total population is 8.1 (Greenstein et al., 1988, p. ix). These findings support the view that minority groups are more vulnerable to periods of economic hardship. Certainly, the findings point out to the need for studies to examine questions related to Hispanic poverty and to assess avenues of alleviating it.

Gantz (1988) has attributed the increase in poverty among Hispanics to several factors. These include: 1) lower wages paid to Hispanic workers as compared to white workers, 2) the widening of the gap between rich and poor people in the United States that has adversely affected Hispanics who are overrepresented in the latter group, 3) cuts in federal and state sponsored social programs such as Food Stamps, Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and low-income housing, 4) lack of a high school or college education, and 5) the increase in the number of families headed by females. Reports indicate that the poverty rate for Hispanic female-headed families is far

higher than the rate for Hispanic married couples (Valdivieso & Davis, 1988).

It can also be argued that another reason Hispanics are poor is because of segregation. Segregation is related to poverty and migration. Segregation determines, largely, access to education and other societal resources. It also limits migration by limiting the number and types of destinations available. This limited number of destinations may be at the regional and national level as well as within SMSA and non-SMSA. To illustrate, Utah is a low priority destination for Blacks (minority) because of perceptions of acceptance or actual acceptance by the state's culture. Also, flow of information about opportunities is limited by absence of critical mass of minorities in many locations. This is important for poor and minorities since most of their information about places comes from social contacts, networks, etc.

Research indicates that poverty determines, among other things, the level of education, type of occupation, and obviously, the total income a person will receive during his/her life (Danziger et al., 1986) Being poor indexes the material conditions of people and determines the life chances of subsequent generations (Farmer et al., 1989). These factors are directly related to the degree of residential mobility an individual experiences

(Shaw, 1975). For example, a person with low educational level will be less likely to migrate than a person with more education, for an educated person may have more information about a variety of destinations. Individuals who hold low skill occupations that invariably pay lower salaries will also be more limited to explore areas with more opportunities. They will tend to be locked into an area that offers few advantages.

Education has been identified as being a salient parameter in the access to resources in American society. Blau and Duncan (1967) have alluded to the importance of the upward mobility of workers. They argue that "the high level of popular education in the United States provided the lower strata with outstanding opportunities for long distance mobility" (p. 435). Although Hispanic youth are making educational gains as compared to past generations (Davis et al., 1983; Bean & Tienda, 1987), they still lag behind nonHispanics. More than one of every three Hispanic heads-of -household without a high school diploma lived in poverty in 1987 (Greenstein et al., 1988).

Hispanics lag behind in employment rates due to a relative lack of human capital or just plain prejudice (Jensen & Tienda, 1989). The unemployment situation shows few signs of improving and in fact, Hirscham (1986) indicates that the employment gap between white men and

Hispanic youth has increased in recent years despite the narrowing of the educational gap between these two groups. Moreover, Hispanics workers tend to be concentrated in the lower paid, lesser skilled occupations than the overall work force. Available jobs tend to be characterized by high seasonal or cyclical unemployment; thus, they tend to exacerbate poverty. Hispanics who find themselves in this disadvantaged position will be more limited in their ability to migrate. Thus, poverty constrains the same individuals who could most improve their economic situation by migrating to places that offer more opportunities for advancement.

The Studies of Migration

The literature about Hispanic migration in the United States almost always includes only accounts of changes in residential distributions, or description of the volume of movements between specific localities. Most of these studies have used a macrolevel perspective based on the characteristics of aggregates. They do not explain how social structure influences individual or group outcomes (Tienda, 1981; Lee 1985). Wells (1976) and Cuellar (1971) are the exception to this. Wells attempted to integrate macro and micro level factors of migration,

thus illustrating the value of multilevel analysis for interpreting migration patterns in terms of specific circumstance where they emerge and Cuellar acknowledges that to understand the migratory behavior and the adjustment to the new environment it is important to understand the structure and attributes of the community as well as the social, economic, and demographic characteristics of the migrants.

Most micro level studies of Hispanic migration focus on social and economic consequences of migration. Several studies have compared rural to urban Mexican-Americans and Black and Anglo migrants with similar individual characteristics of those who remained in their communities of origin (Price, 1971; Blevins, 1971). Their research concluded that virtually all migrants were better off financially than before moving, and they were better off than their nonmigrant counterparts who reminded in rural areas.

Brawer (1973) has shown how migration influences the educational attainment of the children of Texan migrants to Racine, Wisconsin. After controlling for possible bias, she showed that the children of the migrants had a clear advantage in terms of postgraduate education, grade completed and dropout rates despite the fact that their parents expected a lower performance than actually achieved. Her explanation of the higher achievement of

these children was the greater emphasis on academic performance and the higher standards in the Racine area rather than cultural factors.

Research (Torrecilha & Sandefur, 1989) indicates that public assistance levels often have a positive effect on the migration of minorities, especially the poor. In other words, the possibility of higher welfare payments may attract the poor. The availability of higher welfare payments as a factor drawing migrants from the rural areas to the cities is an area that has been relatively ignored in the studies of Hispanic migration (Newman, 1978) This neglect is surprising given the fact that many Hispanics receive public assistance (Greenstein et al., 1988). Exceptions to this include the studies conducted by Perry and Snyder (1971). They showed that the negative attitude toward welfare payments for migrant farm workers was associated with conservative elements, such as affiliation with the Catholic Church, low socioeconomic status background, and low educational attainment. Tienda (1982) indicates that the issue of public assistance as a stimulus for the migration of Hispanics to northern cities resurfaced during the early 1980.

Data and Methods

The study of migration has been historically plagued by the lack of surveys specifically focusing on migration. Although the Youth Cohort of the National Longitudinal Survey (NLS/Y) was not designed specifically for migration research, it circumvents a number of these problems. This survey, together with the 1988 County and City Data Book (U.S. Census Bureau), provides the data base to conduct this investigation. The NLS/Y is one of several ongoing panel surveys commissioned by the Department of Labor in the mid-1960s and instituted by the Center for Human Resource Research (CHRR) of Ohio State University. The NLS/Y is a national probability sample of 12,686 young men and women who were between the ages of 14 and 21 in 1979. The probability sample had an over representation of blacks, Hispanics, and economically disadvantaged whites (CHRR, 1986, pp. 9-10). This research is limited to the 2002 Hispanic respondents included in the NLS/Y. The exclusion of cases with missing data and respondents not in the labor force leaves a population of 1466 Hispanic respondents for inclusion in this analysis.

Individual migration between 1984 and 1986 is the dependent variable for this study. Migration is defined by comparison of counties of residence at the times of

previous years will be employed to help explain migration behavior that occurred between 1984 and 1986. The availability of information on pre-migration characteristics is a major strength of these data. Contextual information is taken from the 1988 City County Data Book.

Log linear modeling will be the statistical technique used in this investigation. This statistical method is preferred since the data used here have a highly skewed dichotomous dependent variable and dichotomous independent variables (Hanushek & Jackson, 1977), i.e., 11.2 % migrants and 88.8 % nonmigrants. The log linear model is expressed in the equation as follows:

$$\text{Log}\left(\frac{Pi}{1-p_i}\right)=B+\sum_{j=1}^{r} B_j z_{ij}, \quad i=1,2,\ldots N$$

where the quantities zi for J=1,2...r are the values of r independent variables for the ith respondents. The probability for the ith respondent to take value 1, that is, the probability for the ith respondent to move during the interval in this study is expressed in the following equation:

$$\Pr(Y_i=1)=p_i=\frac{\text{Exp}(B_0+\sum_{j=1}^{r} B_j z_{ij})}{1+\text{Ex}(B_0+\sum_{j=1}^{r} B_j z_{ij})}$$

if Y, Y....Y be independent binary, random variable taking values 0 or 1.

taking values 0 or 1.

The purpose of log linear analysis is to measure the relationship between the exogenous variables X and the dependent variable Y, which is assumed to be a dichotomous variable (Reynolds, 1977; Fienberg, 1980). In addition, log linear analysis is appropriate for categorical data, where the observations are not from populations that are normally distributed with constant variance (Knoke & Burke, 1980).

In a log linear model, the dependent variable is not the actual value of the variable but the log odds or expected odds (omega) as a function of the other independent variables (Knoke & Burke, 1980). An odds is the ratio of the frequency that an event occurs and the frequency that it does not occur. An odds ratio greater than 1.0 indicates an increased likelihood of the event occurring, while an odds ratio less than 1.0 indicates a decreased likelihood of the event occurring (Morgan & Teachman, 1988). Log linear analysis yields coefficients that indicate the change in the log of the expected odds on the dependent variable associated with a or category change in an independent variable (Reynolds, 1977).

Poverty, both at the personal and macrolevel, will be an important variable in this study of migration behavior. At the macrolevel, characteristics of the area of current residence which are external to the individual

will be tested. The characteristics will be further categorized into contextual variables according to the type of aggregation. (Freedman, 1979; Gardner, 1981). The contextual variables refer to the aggregations of characteristics of individuals who live in a specific area.

Hypotheses which Integrate the Influence of Macro and Microlevel Variables on Individual Migration

Migration

Both micro and macrolevel variables are important determinants of migration behavior. However, when taken separately, they do not provide a complete understanding of the migratory behavior of individuals. For this reason, it is important to conduct studies that integrate these variables. This study hypothesizes that the migration behavior of socioeconomic groups is affected by macrolevel phenomenon. Research indicates that macro level factors have a "direct effect on migration, either simply or interactively with individuals or families variables" (Findley & DeJong, 1985, p. 29). For example, individuals with low socioeconomic status or minority status will tend to be more affected by high unemployment rates in an area. On the other hand, job opportunities for unskilled workers are restricted to local areas and

individuals with low income do not have enough money to allow them to move to areas with greater job opportunities (Gardner, 1981).

The hypotheses which test the interaction of both the economic characteristics of the area where the respondent currently lives and his/her personal socioeconomic characteristics are as follows:

a. Hispanic youth who receive public assistance and who live in areas with a high percentage of poor families will be less likely to migrate than Hispanic youth who do not receive public assistance and who live in areas with a low percentage of poor families. This hypothesis is intended to explore the idea behind the culture of poverty thesis that receiving government assistance tends to exacerbate poverty. And those in such a culture are unlikely to move.

b. Hispanic youth with family income below the poverty level who reside in an area with a high percentage of poor will be less likely to migrate than Hispanics with a family income above poverty level and who reside in areas with a low percentage of other poor families. This hypothesis is intended to explore the idea that poverty acts as a limitation to the migration of people.

c. Hispanic youth who are recipients of public

assistance and who live in areas with high unemployment rates will be less migratory than those who are not recipients of public assistance and who live in areas with low unemployment rates. This hypothesis is intended to test the idea whether being a recipient of government helps people from migrating.

d. Hispanic youth with family income below the poverty level and who reside in areas with a high percentage of unemployment will be less migratory than Hispanic youth with family income above the poverty level and who reside in areas with a low percentage of unemployment. This hypothesis is intended to test the idea that structural factors such as unemployment of an area or percentage of families in poverty are related to migration.

The Variables: Their Measurement and Conceptualization

The variables used in this study are summarized in Table 1

Migration: Status and Type

In this study, the migration measure employed as the

TABLE 1

Summary of the Dependent and Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

Migration Status: Migrant and Nonmigrant

Independent Variables

Microlevel Variables: (Characteristics of Respondents)

Sex: Male and Female

Occupation Status: High and Low Status

Educational Attainment: High and Low Attainment

Public Assistance: Recipient and Nonrecipient

Poverty Status: Below and Above Poverty Level

Macrolevel Variables: (Characteristics of counties)

Unemployment Rate: Low and High Rate

Percentage of Families Poor: Below and Above Poverty Level

dependent variable will be defined according to comparison of county of residence in 1984 with county of residence in 1986. Migration measures to signify migration status will be calculated by comparing the county of residence in 1984 and 1986. If Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) county and state codes of residence in 1984 are different from that in 1986, the respondent is considered a migrant during that interval. A respondent is classified a non-migrant if he/she has the same FIPS county or state code of residence at the end of the interval as that in the time of those two interviews.

Microlevel Variables

Sex

The respondent's sex is a dichotomous variable which takes the value of 1 if male and 2 if female.

Labor Force Status

This variable refers to 1984 and had been dichotomized into two categories: unemployed with a value of 1 and employed with a value of 2. A respondent is classified as employed if working during the survey week. A respondent is classified unemployed if he/she is neither attending nor enrolled in school, and is not working

during the survey week but looking for work.

Occupational Status

This variable refers to 1984 and was dichotomized into two categories based on the Duncan Index of Occupations. A respondent has a high status occupation if the respondent is working at an occupation classified on the Duncan Index higher than 50. The respondent has a low occupation if his/her occupation was at 50 or lower on the Duncan Index. A high status occupation takes a value of 1 and a value of 2 if low.

Educational Attainment

This variable refers to 1984 and was dichotomized into two categories: low and high educational attainment. A respondent has low educational attainment if the number of formal schooling completed is less than the mean years of the sample (10.5). A respondent has high educational attainment if the number of years of formal schooling is higher than the mean years of formal schooling completed by all the respondents.

Measures of Poverty Variables at the Microlevel

Public Assistance

This variable refers to 1984 and will be dichotomized

as non-recipient and recipient. In this study, public assistance includes: aid to families with dependent families (AFDC), food stamps, supplemental security income, unemployment compensation, or any other public assistance.

Poverty Status

This variable refers to 1984 and is dichotomized into two categories: below and above poverty level. If the respondent's family income is less than the poverty threshold specified by the Census Bureau (U.S. Census Bureau, 1988b, p. G-7), the respondent will be classified as poor. The respondent will be classified as nonpoor if the total family income is higher than the poverty threshold. This variable represent the amount of family income as measured in 1984. The NLS/Y compares the family income taking in consideration the number of people in the family with the poverty line on a yearly basis.

Macrolevel Variables

Unemployment Rate

The variable represents "the percent of the total population 16 years and over who were neither 'at work' nor with a job, but not 'at work' and who were (a)

looking for work during the last four weeks and (b) available to accept a job" (US Census Bureau, 1988a p. G-8). This variable was measured in 1986. If more than 6.5% of the total population in the labor force in the county are unemployed, the county is considered a high unemployment county.

Percentage of Families Below Poverty

This variable comes from the County and City Data Book where "families were identified as below poverty level...if their family income...was less than the poverty threshold specified for the applicable family size, age of the householder, and number of related children under 18 present" (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1988a, p.G-7). This variable was measured in 1979. If more than 9.6% of families in the county have an income below the poverty level, the area is identified as a poor area.

The log linear coefficients of the interactive effects of personal characteristics, poverty status, and a contextual characteristics of the place of origin on the log-odds of the migrants and nonmigrants are presented in Table 2. The variables selected for inclusion in this analysis had a maximum likelihood estimator with a probability less than .05. Only variables statistically related to migration status were examined. These

variables were analyzed to assess the main and interactive effects on the migration behavior of the Hispanic youth. The variables used in this analysis were included in six different models.

Model 1 includes the variables sex, occupational status, educational attainment, poverty status, public assistance, unemployment rate, and percentage of families poor. In model 2 the same variables included in Model 1 have been added, plus the interactions of occupation with unemployment rate with percentage of poor families. Model 3 includes the independent effects of sex, occupation status, educational attainment, poverty status, public assistance, unemployment rate, and percentage of poor families. In addition, the third model includes the interaction of education and unemployment rate. Model 4 includes the same independent effects variables of Models 1, 2, and 3, plus the interaction of poverty status, and unemployment rate and poverty status and percentage of families poor. In Model 5, in addition to the independent effect of variables included in the other Models, the interaction of public assistance and percentage of families poor has been added. Model 6 examines the two way interaction with all the variables.

Table 2

Logit Models of Micro and Macro Socio-Economic Characteristics on Log-Odds of Migrants to Nonmigrants (N = 1466)

Variables	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	Coeff.	Odds[a/]	Coeff.	Odds	Coeff.	Odds	Coeff.	Odds	Coeff.	Odds	Coeff.	Odds
Sex												
Male	.0132	1.006	.0241	1.049	.0272	1.056	.0892*	1.195	.0887*	1.194	.0997*	1.22
Occupational status												
High status	-.0512	.9026	-.0862	.8416	-.0536	.8416	-.0530	.8983	-.0505	.9059	-.0982	.82
Low status	-.0449	.9141	-.0237	.9537	-.0443	.9537	-.0432	.9172	-.0480	.9084	-.0245	.95
Educational attainment												
Low education	-.1057**	.8094	-.0993**	.7423	-.1252**	.7784	-.1059**	.8091	-.1034**	.8131	-.1239**	.78
Poverty status												
Below poverty	.0814*	1.1768	.0824**	1.1791	.0812**	1.1763	.0992**	1.2189	.0813*	1.1765	.1141**	1.25
Public assistance												
Recipient	-.0500	.9048	-.0526	.9001	-.0464	.9113	-.0534	.8987	.0890*	.8369	-.0960*	.82
% Unemployment												
High % unemployed	.1051**	1.2339	.0690	1.1479	.1015*	1.2250	.0807*	1.1751	.1096*	1.2450	.0590	1.12
% Poor families												
High % poor	-.0549	.8960	-.0107	.9788	-.0544	.8969	-.0579	.8906	.0140	1.0283	.0554	1.11
Occupation X unemployment rate												
Hi-occ in Hi-unemp			-.1089	.8042							-.1050	.81
Lo-occ in Hi-unemp			.1233*	1.2796							.1192*	1.26
Occupation X % poor												
Hi-occ in Hi-poor %			.1236	1.2804							.1639*	1.38
Lo-occ in Hi-poor %			-.1075*	.8065							-.1098*	.80
Education X unemployment rate												
Lo-ed in Hi-unemp					.0142	1.0288					.0238	1.04
Education X % poor												
Lo-ed in Hi-poor %					.0571	1.1204					.0731*	1.15
Poverty status X unemployment rate												
Poor in Hi-unemp							-.0531	.8992			-.0565	.89
Poverty status X % poor												
Poor in Hi-poor %							-.0131	.9741			.0452	.91
Public assistance X unemployment												
Recipient in Hi-unemp			.0095	1.0191	.0271	1.0556						
Public Assistance X % poor												
Recipient in Hi-poor %									.0976*	1.2155	.0978*	1.21
Constant		-1.0362		-1.050		-1.0381		-1.0270		-1.0663		-1.0714
$a/_2$												
X		78.90		73.06		75.40		76.30		74.53		59.90
D.F.		74		70		72		72		72		64

Findings

Interactive Effects of the Micro and Macro Level Factors on Migration

Educational attainment, poverty status, and high percentages of unemployment are statistically related to migration behavior (Model 1). Hispanics with low education are less likely to migrate. Those who live in counties with high unemployment or Hispanics who are poor are more likely to migrate.

In Model 2, the interactions of occupation and unemployment and occupation and percentage of poor families have been included. The variables included in the interactions are statistically related to migration behavior. However, high unemployment is no longer statistically significant. Low education continues to act as a barrier for migration. Poverty status continues to be a significant predictor of migration of Hispanics. The interaction of high status occupation and counties with high unemployment seem to act as a push for migration. The interaction of low status occupation in counties with high unemployment seems to act as an inhibitor for migration.

The significance of high unemployment is regained in Model 3 when the interactions of occupation and high unemployment and occupation and percentage of poor people

are eliminated from the analysis. Low education and poverty continue to be statistically related to migration.

In Model 4, sex of the respondent becomes statistically significant related to migration. Educational attainment and poverty are consistently related to migration of Hispanic youth as is high unemployment. The interactions introduced in this model do not appear to be statistically related to migration.

Model 5 indicates that those who are recipients of public assistance and live in counties with high unemployment rates are more likely to migrate than those who live in counties with low unemployment. Sex, educational attainment, and poverty status continue to be statistically significant. The interaction of being a recipient of public assistance and living in counties with high percentage of poor is statistically significant. That is, these two variables are good predictors of migration of Hispanic youth.

Model 6 incorporates all the micro- and macro-level variables. Sex continues to be statistically significant, as do educational attainment and poverty status. being a recipient of public assistance also continues to be statistically significant although the coefficient decreases in combination with other variables. The interactive effect of low status

occupation and high unemployment also is statistically significant. High status occupation with a high percentage of poor people appear to be significantly related to migration behavior. The size of this coefficient is relatively large. The interaction of low status occupation and a high percentage of poor people is inversely related to the migration of the Hispanic youth.

The overall probabilities of the models tested in this section (as indicated by the probability level) indicate that the variables included in each model do not provide a good fit for the data. It should be noted that no attempt was made to fit the model to the data. It is important to note that the size of the coefficients are relatively small, therefore caution must be used in interpreting these results.

The results shown above indicate that Hispanic youth who come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are less likely to migrate. Those who receive public assistance are less likely to migrate; but, those who are from areas with high unemployment tend to migrate more. Living in areas with more poor families is also an indicator of migration although this is statistically nonsignificant. When the interaction of these variables were tested, educational attainment, unemployment rate of the place of origin, and poverty, as measured by family income and poverty status of origin place of residence, had a

significant effect on the migratory behavior of Hispanic youth.

Hispanics with lower educational attainment and who reside in areas with high unemployment rates tend to have lower migration rates. The effects of poverty status on the migration behavior of Hispanic youth differ depending on the measure of poverty used. Hispanics who come from families with income below the poverty level tend to be more migratory than those who come from families with income above the poverty level. Yet recipients of public assistance are less migratory than nonrecipients. Recipients of public assistance who live in areas with high numbers of poor families tend to be less migratory than nonrecipients. In addition, Hispanics with low status occupation who reside in areas with high unemployment are more migratory. Hispanics with high occupational status who live in areas with high rate of poor families tend to have higher migration rates.

Conclusions

The objective of this paper was to investigate the question of whether poor Hispanics exhibited less migration than nonpoor Hispanics. Several hypotheses were tested for this purpose. In addition, the research

proposed to contribute to the understanding and integration of micro and macro level variables in the migration behavior of Hispanic youth. The literature indicates that Hispanics tend to be less mobile than other groups (Cheong, 1987) and have high rates of poverty. Several theoretical perspectives suggest migration is a key strategy in increasing the socioeconomic mobility of individuals and a means by which individuals may escape poverty (Da Vanzo & Morrison, 1981) Yet, research also indicates that poverty acts as an inhibitor to migration (Friedli, 1986, Blevins, 1971). Harrington (1984) indicates that the poor in high poverty areas tend to become poorer over time because new business avoid locating in these areas. The poor have limited access to economic opportunities in areas where economic opportunities are deficient (Schiller, 1980), and the only way for many to avoid becoming poorer is to move away. Migration to economically developed areas may be one avenue for the poor to reach higher levels of socioeconomic attainment. However, intervening obstacles, such as low monetary resources for moving and the lack of information about opportunities in areas with few Hispanics may limit the ability of poor Hispanics to use migration as a means to upgrade their economic situation.

To assess whether poor Hispanics exhibited lower

migration than nonpoor Hispanics, socioeconomic, demographic, and contextual variables, both at the macro and microlevel,were selected as indicators of the economic conditions of individual respondents and the counties where respondents resided at the time of the interviews. The literature on poverty and migration indicates these variables to be important predictors of migration (Ritchey, 1976, Lee, 1985). This study indicates that although the variables selected are relevant predictors of migration, the results indicate that they do not have significant explanatory power when explaining the migration behavior of Hispanics. Evidence of the inadequacy of these variables as significant predictors of migration is indicated by the small size of the coefficients and the low probability level of the models in the log linear analysis. Possibly variables not included in this study are better predictors of the migration behavior of Hispanic youth, the lack of significant predictors among these variables for Hispanics is important.

Overall, this investigation found partial support for the hypothesis that poor Hispanics are less likely to migrate than nonpoor Hispanics. This conclusion is dependent on how poverty is defined. For example, only two measures of poverty at the microlevel, poverty status and public assistance, were relatively consistent as

significant indicators of migration. Two macrolevel variables, indicators of economic conditions of the county of residence of Hispanic youth, were consistently significant predictors of migration: unemployment rate and percentage of families poor. Based on these results, one may conclude that being poor and living in a poor area places limitations on the migratory behavior of Hispanic youth. But again, one must use caution in generalizing these findings for the reasons mentioned above. Educational attainment was also consistently statistically related to the migration of Hispanic youth, a finding consistent with the migration literature (Hamilton, 1965).

These insights may indicate that the lower migration of Hispanics is due to their lower educational attainment and their higher poverty rates. That is, low educational attainment and poverty places constraints on the migration propensity of Hispanics to areas where they may find better economic conditions. The lower migration rates for Hispanics may be a reflection of the pervasiveness of restricted opportunities for members of this ethnic group in the United States. Or, it may be that the lower levels of human capital, associated with being poor, inhibit migration for Hispanics.

From a minority status perspective, it can be argued that being Hispanic in itself is a barrier for migration

and obtaining better economic conditions. An important implication of being a member of a minority group is that opportunities are significantly more limited (Simpson & Yinger, 1965). The inability of minorities to take advantage of existing job opportunities due to the lack of marketable skills or low education is a factor that must be taken into consideration when one is seeking to explain the lower rates of Hispanic migration.

These findings have important implications for policy making. As the literature indicates, Hispanics, as a group, are trailing well behind the general U.S. population on all measures of social and economic well-being. Poverty rates for Hispanics actually increased between 1979 and 1987 and they are likely to persist in the 1990's, unless measures are taken to curb poverty. As discussed above, poverty status places limitations on the geographical mobility of Hispanics and may limit their ability to upgrade their economic well-being. At the individual level, policy makers need to concentrate on providing education and training to Hispanic youth since the educational attainment of Hispanics, although it has improved, remains below the level of their non-Hispanics counterparts and Hispanics tend to have higher rates of unemployment than whites. With education and training, Hispanics can increase their human capital. However, training is not enough. If there are no jobs

available to unemployed individuals, the training is largely wasted. Since most people ensure their income primarily through earnings, programs should address the issue of adequate income. Since many poor people show a strong commitment to the labor force, policies aimed at generating employment and protection of employment are needed.